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CIA Tapes Controversy Shows Why Openness on Syria Important *Hoekstra Amendment to Intelligence Bill Requires Full Notification to Committees on Syria Incident*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Mich., the top Republican on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, today said the lack of disclosure by the intelligence community on events in Syria raises the same red flags as the failure to notify the congressional intelligence committee of the destruction of interrogation tapes by the CIA.

Hoekstra pointed to the ongoing tape controversy and an amendment he authored in the proposed House-Senate intelligence authorization conference report to press leaders of the intelligence community to fulfill their responsibility to keep the congressional intelligence committees informed.

“The congressional intelligence committees exist to oversee the intelligence community and review our nation’s most classified information on behalf of the full Congress and American people,” Hoekstra said. “Trouble arises, as we see with the CIA tape case, when intelligence leaders refuse to comply with their constitutional duty to keep Congress ‘fully and currently’ informed.

“What happened in Syria has a direct impact on issues and policies being considered by Congress right now. Congress is asserting its right to know this information. We will not accept being forced to legislate in the dark.”

The amendment proposed by Hoekstra withholds certain intelligence funds until the intelligence community provides a full briefing to the House and Senate intelligence committees on information related to Israeli action in Syria. Much like the fact that the CIA taped early interrogations was restricted to only a handful of lawmakers, information on the Syria situation has been limited to fewer than a dozen congressional leaders.

Hoekstra said the restricted handling of the information opens the door for a similar controversy in the future.

“Given the tight hold on this information, it is possible that within a couple of years no one on the committees will have knowledge of what happened in Syria. That is what happened with respect to the existence of these tapes and what opened the door to their destruction without notice.

“Just like the tapes, what happened in Syria is important, and we can’t let this happen again.”